

Name Suggestions for J. J. Finley Elementary
As of 7/20/20

People (Past & Present)
w/Partial Biographies
(random order)

Josiah T. Walls	Was born into slavery, and despite that, he became the 3rd Black Congressman of the United States. He is an icon of Florida history, and children should learn and be inspired by his story. He deserves to be honored with his name on the school and his story in the minds of its students. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josiah_T._Walls
Carolyn B. Parker	Parker was an African-American Gainesville physicist who worked on the Manhattan project, the first African-American woman known to have gained a postgraduate degree in physics. Her name is not (to my knowledge) honored anywhere else in Gainesville at present. Wikipedia page: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carolyn_Parker
Matthew M. Lewey	Matthew M. Lewey (1842-1933) was a combat veteran of the Civil War, serving with the famous 55th Massachusetts at Fort Wagner, Olustee, and Honey Hill, where he was seriously wounded. He came to Alachua County after the war as a teacher and to begin practicing law. He was elected to the Gainesville City Commission. He edited and published a newspaper in Gainesville that crusaded for equal rights for all citizens. UF Professor Paul Ortiz has written about Matthew Lewey in his book, <i>Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920</i> (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
Emmett Till	1941-1955 Born in Chicago in 1941, Emmett Till traveled to the Mississippi Delta in the summer of 1955 to visit relatives. When he went to a store to buy candy, he was accused of whistling at Carolyn Bryant who worked in the store. Several nights later Roy Bryant and his half-brother, J.W. Milam, went to Emmett's great-uncles' house and kidnapped the boy. They took him out, savagely beat him, shot him in the head, and put his body in the Tallahatchie River. Emmett's body was returned to Chicago. His mother insisted on a public funeral with an open coffin. Thousands attended either the viewing or the funeral. In September, an all-white jury found Bryant and Milam innocent, but the next year, in an interview in <i>Look</i> magazine, they confessed to Emmett's murder. When asked why he killed Emmett, Milam said, "What else could I do? He thought he was as good as any white man." Emmett Till was murdered fifteen months after <i>Brown vs. Board of Education</i> and four months before the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Many consider him to be the first martyr of the modern Civil Rights Movement.
Kathy Valdes	Past Principal
Donna Jones	Past Principal
Mike Bair	Past Teacher @ Finley (deceased). Worked there and changed the entire way people view their world. An incredible encounter and an outstanding teacher, Mike Bair encompassed everything positive the SBAC stood for. A person who dedicated their life to teaching should naturally be memorialized by a school more than someone who fought for indoctrination.
Darby	(Head custodian retiring after 30 years)
Ida B. Wells	1862-1931 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Born into slavery in Mississippi; freed by the Emancipation Proclamation Co-owned an African-American newspaper in Memphis where she became an investigative reporter, investigating many cases of lynching and other violent acts against African-Americans

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved to Chicago and helped Frederick Douglass lead a boycott against the World's Columbian Exposition for not admitting blacks to the fair • Active in the Woman's Club movement • Helped W.E.B. DuBose establish the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People • An early active opponent of school segregation in the early 1900s • Prominent in the women's suffrage movement although she was not well-received by the white leaders of the movement
George Starke	
Lance Corporal Vernon Thomas Carter, Jr.	<p>He was the first Alachua County Vietnam War Casualty, along with earning the Purple Heart.</p> <p>https://www.honorstates.org/index.php?id=265844 https://marines.togetherweserved.com/usmc/servlet/tws.webapp.WebApp?cmd=ShadowBoxProfile&type=Person&ID=40704</p>
Roberta Kline	<p>https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/gainesville/obituary.aspx?n=roberta-kline&pid=117265355&fhid=4014</p>
Bylle Avery	<p>Bylle Avery is a women's health advocate and an activist who founded the Black Women's Health Imperative. Her activism work began in Gainesville in 1971 when she gave a panel talk at UF Medical Center on reproductive rights. Over the past 35 years, Ms. Avery has been honored with several honorary degrees and over 50 awards, including the MacArthur Foundation Fellowship for Social Contribution (commonly known as the "MacArthur Genius Award").</p>
Edmund P. Gaines	<p>The earliest town in Alachua County was created in 1824 and called Newnansville. When the cross Florida railroad bypassed Newnansville and was located further south, the town of Gainesville was established. It was named for General Edmund P. Gaines, who was considered a hero during the Seminole wars.</p>
Jesse J. Aaron	<p>Gainesville wood sculptor, Jesse J. Aaron. He lived on NW 7th Avenue and is quite renown and a Gainesville treasure.</p>
Nancy Green	
Billy Galione	
Karen Hunter	<p>Karen attended Alachua County public schools and graduated from Gainesville High School before attending UF, where she earned a Bachelors Degree in Education.</p> <p>Karen's teaching life included many admirable milestones in a career that spanned an amazing 34 years, 32 of which were spent as a first grade teacher at J.J. Finley Elementary School.</p>
Dock Luckie	<p>Dock was a gator football player and professional athlete. He also went on to be an officer with GPD and had a son playing football for GHS. He's a kind, compassionate, and respectable human and person of color.</p>
Dr. Cullen Banks (C.W. Banks)	<p>Dr Banks was the first physician of color to practice in Gainesville. He faithfully served this community for many years as an OB-GYN/Family Practice doctor. He was highly respected by his patients and his colleagues. He was the first black physician to gain privileges at AGH. I believe that the entire community would enthusiastically support this choice. I am aware of many nurses and doctors who worked with Dr Banks over the years who approve this alternative.</p>
John Dukes, Jr.	<p>In his 50 years in the Alachua County school system, Dukes served as principal of two high schools and as the first black assistant superintendent.</p> <p>In August, 1970, Eastside High School opened with Dukes as its principal. The first class graduated in 1973.</p> <p>In 1976, Dukes' tenure as Eastside's principal ended. He was named deputy superintendent of student support services and served in that capacity until his retirement in 2003.</p>
Robert "Bob" Acosta	
Septima Poinsette Clark	
Jo Ann Robinson	

Von Fraser																																																																																																																															
W. George Allen	First black man to graduate the University of Florida. I believe this would be a great name to honor a pivotal part of not only UF, but Gainesville as an entire community!																																																																																																																														
B. B. King																																																																																																																															
One of the lynching victims in Gainesville	<table border="1"> <tr><td>1891</td><td>17-Feb</td><td>Tony Champion</td><td>B</td><td>Gainesville</td><td>Old Savage lot in front of Mr. Post's house</td></tr> <tr><td>1891</td><td>17-Feb</td><td>Michael Kelly</td><td>W</td><td>Gainesville</td><td>Old Savage lot in front of Mr. Post's house</td></tr> <tr><td>1891</td><td>24-Aug</td><td>Andrew Ford</td><td>B</td><td>Gainesville</td><td>Old Savage lot in front of Mr. Post's house</td></tr> <tr><td>1892</td><td>12-Jan</td><td>Henry Hinson</td><td>B</td><td>Micanopy</td><td>Town square</td></tr> <tr><td>1892</td><td>6-Sep</td><td>Unknown Negro Boy</td><td>B</td><td>Waldo</td><td>Old storage building</td></tr> <tr><td>1894</td><td>12-Jan</td><td>Charles Willis</td><td>B</td><td>Rochelle</td><td>House</td></tr> <tr><td>1895</td><td>2-Apr</td><td>William Rawls</td><td>B</td><td>Newnansville</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1896</td><td>26-Nov</td><td>Alfred(o) Daniels</td><td>B</td><td>Gainesville</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1902</td><td>1-Sep</td><td>Manny Price</td><td>B</td><td>Newberry</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1902</td><td>1-Sep</td><td>Robert (Bob) Scruggs</td><td>B</td><td>Newberry</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1904</td><td>14-Jan</td><td>Jumbo Clark</td><td>B</td><td>High Springs</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1908</td><td>6-Feb</td><td>Jack Long</td><td>W</td><td>Newberry</td><td>A spreading oak</td></tr> <tr><td>1913</td><td>13-Dec</td><td>Henry White</td><td>B</td><td>Campville</td><td>In woman's yard</td></tr> <tr><td>1916</td><td>19-Aug</td><td>Stella Young</td><td>B</td><td>Newberry</td><td>A mile from town</td></tr> <tr><td>1916</td><td>19-Aug</td><td>Andrew McHenry</td><td>B</td><td>Newberry</td><td>A mile from town</td></tr> <tr><td>1916</td><td>19-Aug</td><td>Rev. Josh J. Baskins</td><td>B</td><td>Newberry</td><td>A mile from town</td></tr> <tr><td>1916</td><td>19-Aug</td><td>Mary Dennis</td><td>B</td><td>Newberry</td><td>A mile from town</td></tr> <tr><td>1916</td><td>19-Aug</td><td>Bert Dennis</td><td>B</td><td>Newberry</td><td>A mile from town</td></tr> <tr><td>1916</td><td>19-Aug</td><td>Jim Dennis</td><td>B</td><td>Newberry</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1923</td><td>17-Jan</td><td>Abraham Wilson</td><td>B</td><td>Newberry</td><td>Cherry tree, 1 -1/2 mi from town</td></tr> <tr><td>1926</td><td>27-Dec</td><td>George Buddington</td><td>B</td><td>Waldo</td><td>Orange Heights Rd 3 mi. from town</td></tr> </table>	1891	17-Feb	Tony Champion	B	Gainesville	Old Savage lot in front of Mr. Post's house	1891	17-Feb	Michael Kelly	W	Gainesville	Old Savage lot in front of Mr. Post's house	1891	24-Aug	Andrew Ford	B	Gainesville	Old Savage lot in front of Mr. Post's house	1892	12-Jan	Henry Hinson	B	Micanopy	Town square	1892	6-Sep	Unknown Negro Boy	B	Waldo	Old storage building	1894	12-Jan	Charles Willis	B	Rochelle	House	1895	2-Apr	William Rawls	B	Newnansville		1896	26-Nov	Alfred(o) Daniels	B	Gainesville		1902	1-Sep	Manny Price	B	Newberry		1902	1-Sep	Robert (Bob) Scruggs	B	Newberry		1904	14-Jan	Jumbo Clark	B	High Springs		1908	6-Feb	Jack Long	W	Newberry	A spreading oak	1913	13-Dec	Henry White	B	Campville	In woman's yard	1916	19-Aug	Stella Young	B	Newberry	A mile from town	1916	19-Aug	Andrew McHenry	B	Newberry	A mile from town	1916	19-Aug	Rev. Josh J. Baskins	B	Newberry	A mile from town	1916	19-Aug	Mary Dennis	B	Newberry	A mile from town	1916	19-Aug	Bert Dennis	B	Newberry	A mile from town	1916	19-Aug	Jim Dennis	B	Newberry		1923	17-Jan	Abraham Wilson	B	Newberry	Cherry tree, 1 -1/2 mi from town	1926	27-Dec	George Buddington	B	Waldo	Orange Heights Rd 3 mi. from town
1891	17-Feb	Tony Champion	B	Gainesville	Old Savage lot in front of Mr. Post's house																																																																																																																										
1891	17-Feb	Michael Kelly	W	Gainesville	Old Savage lot in front of Mr. Post's house																																																																																																																										
1891	24-Aug	Andrew Ford	B	Gainesville	Old Savage lot in front of Mr. Post's house																																																																																																																										
1892	12-Jan	Henry Hinson	B	Micanopy	Town square																																																																																																																										
1892	6-Sep	Unknown Negro Boy	B	Waldo	Old storage building																																																																																																																										
1894	12-Jan	Charles Willis	B	Rochelle	House																																																																																																																										
1895	2-Apr	William Rawls	B	Newnansville																																																																																																																											
1896	26-Nov	Alfred(o) Daniels	B	Gainesville																																																																																																																											
1902	1-Sep	Manny Price	B	Newberry																																																																																																																											
1902	1-Sep	Robert (Bob) Scruggs	B	Newberry																																																																																																																											
1904	14-Jan	Jumbo Clark	B	High Springs																																																																																																																											
1908	6-Feb	Jack Long	W	Newberry	A spreading oak																																																																																																																										
1913	13-Dec	Henry White	B	Campville	In woman's yard																																																																																																																										
1916	19-Aug	Stella Young	B	Newberry	A mile from town																																																																																																																										
1916	19-Aug	Andrew McHenry	B	Newberry	A mile from town																																																																																																																										
1916	19-Aug	Rev. Josh J. Baskins	B	Newberry	A mile from town																																																																																																																										
1916	19-Aug	Mary Dennis	B	Newberry	A mile from town																																																																																																																										
1916	19-Aug	Bert Dennis	B	Newberry	A mile from town																																																																																																																										
1916	19-Aug	Jim Dennis	B	Newberry																																																																																																																											
1923	17-Jan	Abraham Wilson	B	Newberry	Cherry tree, 1 -1/2 mi from town																																																																																																																										
1926	27-Dec	George Buddington	B	Waldo	Orange Heights Rd 3 mi. from town																																																																																																																										
Gloria Merriex	She single handily helped improve the way students retain information all a while making it fun. With her being a local, I believe it will honor her in her death as well.																																																																																																																														
Marva Collins																																																																																																																															
Steve Spurrier																																																																																																																															
Elliene "Ellie" S. Chisholm	<p>Ellie has been the recipient of the Rosa Parks Quiet Courage Award for her work in social justice and children's advocacy. She is involved with her church in racial reconstructive groups that address racial tensions and the history of race relations in our community through love and constructive mediation</p> <p>Please see this story we created on Ms. Chisholm earlier this year: https://ceecs.education.ufl.edu/advocacy-in-the-world-creating-equity-in-education/</p>																																																																																																																														
Finley																																																																																																																															
J. J. Finley																																																																																																																															
Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune	<p>From visitflorida.com: "Born to former slaves, the South Carolina native went on to become a world-renowned teacher, civil rights leader and advisor to five U.S. presidents. In 1904 with five students and a \$1.50 budget, Bethune opened the Daytona Literary and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls, which eventually became Bethune-Cookman University. Today, the coed HBCU in Daytona Beach houses six buildings that make up the Bethune-Cookman Historic District. Tour the house where Bethune spent the second half of her life, hosting the likes of Langston Hughes and Jackie Robinson. You can also catch a concert or play at her namesake Mary McLeod Bethune Performing Arts Center."</p> <p>Link to Smithsonian: https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/mary-mcleod-bethune-vanguard-more-than-50-years-black-progress-180975202/?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=socialmedia</p>																																																																																																																														
Harriet Tubman	<p>1822-1913</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born into a slave family in Maryland; escaped to Philadelphia in 1849 • Conducted thirteen rescue missions in the South and helped seventy African-Americans escape to freedom either in the North or in British North America using anti- slavery activists and "stations" on the Underground Railroad • Met John Brown and helped him plan and recruit participants in the raid on Harper's Ferry in 1859 • Served as a cook, nurse, armed scout, and spy for the Union Army during the Civil War • First woman to lead an armed expedition when she guided the raid on Combahee Ferry which liberated 700 enslaved people • Moved to New York after the war and was active in the women's suffrage movement until she died in 1913 																																																																																																																														
Margaret Sanger																																																																																																																															
Samual Y. Finley																																																																																																																															

William Reuben Thomas	
Vivian Filer	
Barack Obama	The first African American president
Michelle Obama	<p>1) known figure that all elementary students can identify with and be proud to attend a school named after her, they will know and recognize who their school represents</p> <p>2) as our first African-American first lady, she symbolizes what the Finley school emphasizes - all students can achieve greatness,</p> <p>3) her programs while first lady (and continuing on), emphasized the importance of education, especially the importance of education to young girls,</p> <p>4) her programs emphasize the importance of life-long physical activity and fitness which represents the great physical education programs at Finley</p> <p>5) her programs have also supported the importance of work-life balance, especially for working women and single parents, which represents a good fraction of the parents at Finley, and</p> <p>6) she places great emphasis on the importance of art and music in education</p>
Neal Shaw	Mr. Shaw was an Alachua County Native. A farmer by trade and contributed to the shaping of the Civil Rights Movement.
Moore (Harry T and Henrietta V)	This is the last name of Harry T and Henrietta V., two native born Floridian educators and Civil Rights activists of the 1940s, who perished when white supremacists angry at their voter registration work blew up their house. Using only the last name would allow both Mr. and Mrs. Moore to be recognized for their work and sacrifice.
Harriette Vyda Simms Moore	
Stephen Owen Lawrence	<p>The Tuskegee Airman and local minister and motivational speaker who died June 5. He represents the best our community can offer in terms of service to country and God. His positive impact on our city would continue as young people learn about him through the renaming of this school. Mr. Lawrence's service in World War II can be found at the Veterans History Project:</p> <p>http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.82011</p> <p>Stephen was drafted at age 21 into the Army Air Corps. He passed another test for airplane mechanics and was sent to Texas to study machinery in depth. From there, he was assigned as a crew chief at the Tuskegee Army Airfield in Alabama and maintained its aircraft for the duration of the war. He was one of the original Tuskegee Airmen.</p> <p>He later returned to Philadelphia and worked several jobs including welding in shipyards while earning a theology degree. After obtaining his Theology degree, Stephen became an ordained minister. Stephen and Virginia became missionaries for The American Sunday School Union, which was one of his greatest life events. They moved to Mississippi for almost 20 years as missionaries then to Belgrade, FL.</p> <p>Eventually Stephen and his wife, Virginia relocated to Gainesville, Florida where he worked at the local Publix. He retired from Publix and kept his duties as a minister, motivational speaker, and mentor to others.</p> <p>Up to a few years ago, Stephen was active in Gainesville as a motivational speaker at various schools, churches, and other civic events. He was an active member of Gainesville Baptist church.</p>
Tom Petty Thomas E. Petty TE Petty	<p>Tom Petty the history of how successful Tom was in music and how he had a special connection to Gainesville. I also love at the end of the third quarter the football team sings won't back down. Like "we won't back down" against the fight against systemic racism in modern day America. I am thankful this opportunity.</p> <p>Heartbreaker Academy?</p>
Myra Terwilliger	
Myra Terwilliger on Fifth Avenue	
Elijah Cummings	

Jeraldine Williams	<p>Williams became the first African American female manager of Freedom Savings and Loan in Tampa, Florida in 1973. She also worked as an education planner and state coordinator with the Model Cities Program for the City of Tampa. Williams earned her J.D. degree in 1981 at the Florida State University College of Law. She then worked as a staff attorney at Florida Department of Insurance. In 1982, she became the owner and publisher of the <i>Capitol Outlook</i> newspaper in Tallahassee, FL. In the early 1990s, Williams moved to South Africa, where she worked as a writer for <i>Ebony - South Africa</i>. She also established Management Consultancies and conceptualized her book <i>Up to the Bottom</i> while living in Johannesburg, South Africa. Upon returning to the United States in the late 1990s, Williams practiced law in Palm Beach, FL before moving to Hillsborough County, FL, where she worked as an attorney in the 13th Judicial Circuit Court.</p> <p>Williams helped to establish the Greater Tampa Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc., and served on the board of the Bob Gilbertson Central City Family YMCA. She also served on the board of the Joshua House, Infants and Young Children of West Central Florida, Inc. and founded the East Ybor Historic & Civic Association, Inc. She was also a marathon runner. Williams received the Tampa NAACP's Living Legend Award in 2015 and the Griot Drum Award from the Tampa Bay Association of Black Journalists in 2017.</p>
Sylvester Carrier	
Tim Tebow	Humble, hardworking and accomplished.
Fannie Lou Hamer	
Henry S. Harmon	<p>In May 1869, Harmon became the first African American admitted to the Bar to practice law in the State of Florida.</p> <p>In February 1871, Henry S. Harmon was appointed Clerk of the Circuit Court for Alachua County. I believe he was Alachua County's first African-American Clerk of the Court.</p> <p>Sources include: http://www.alachuaclerk.org/Archive/Clerk/Ancient/FrontPage.cfm?DID=11&BID=668&Trans=11 1. Florida's Black Public Official 1867-1924" by Canter Brown Jr., Univ of Alabama Press, 1998. 2. "Henry S/ Harmon: Pioneer African American Attorney in Reconstruction-era Florida," by Darius J. Young, Florida Historical Quarterly 3. "Florida Clerks of the Circuit Court: Their History and Experiences," by William Warren Rogers and Canter Brown Jr., Sentry Press, Tallahassee, FL, 1996.</p>
Johnson Chesnut	<p>Circa 1867, a group of freed black carpenters and trustees built Union Academy, the first black public school in Gainesville. One trustee and gifted carpenter, Johnson Chesnut, was formerly enslaved on Thomas and Serena Haile's plantation near Gainesville. In 1868, he was elected to the Gainesville City Commission.</p> <p>I suggest the former Finley Elementary School be named for Johnson Chestnut, who arrived in Alachua County in 1854, enslaved by Thomas and Serena Haile. Mr. Chesnut moved to Gainesville after emancipation and was elected to the City Commission. He was the first black City alderman in Alachua County history. Moreover, he was a trustee of Union Academy, Gainesville's Freedmen's Bureau School, which demonstrates a deep, historic commitment to education in our community.</p> <p>(See https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/W MVP8D_Chestnut_Funeral_Home)</p>
Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons	<p>Zoharah is a former Professor of Religion at the University of Florida. Ms. Simmons has a long history of civil rights activism and peace work. She was a staff member with the American Friends Service Committee. During her early adult years, she was active with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and spent 7 years fighting for Black voter registration and desegregation in Mississippi, Georgia, and Alabama in the 1960s. She is an incredible scholar, author, speaker, and activist.</p>
Harmon Walls (Henry Harmon/Josiah Walls)	
Sister Hazel Kirkland Williams	<p>'Sister Hazel', and a worker for the poor, began her journey in 1972, moving from New York to Gainesville, FL, where she began her ministry of caring for the homeless. Under the auspices of Angels of Mercy Ministries, Sister Hazel fed the homeless through her 'Welcome Table', clothed and sheltered families in crisis through her 'Rescue Mission',</p>

	<p>attempting to create a safe haven for children. She worked fervently to this end until her death July 16, 2016 at the age of 91.</p>
Joseph "Joel" Marcus Buchanan	<p>Local African American scholar who devoted his life to telling the stories of Black men and women through preservation of oral histories.</p> <p>Here is an article from last year showing many of his accomplishments: www.gainesville.com/news/20190322/uf-unveils-joel-buchanan-archive</p> <p>He had a big personality and made a huge impact on everyone who met him. He sincerely cared about the people of Gainesville and capturing their stories in meaningful ways. https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.gainesville.com/news/20190322/uf-unveils-joel-buchanan-archive%3ftemplate=ampart https://oral.history.ufl.edu/2014/06/05/joel-buchanan-a-giant-of-florida-human-rights-history-and-storytelling/ https://ufdc.ufl.edu/ohfb https://www.infodocket.com/2019/03/23/university-of-florida-unveils-joel-buchanan-archive-of-african-american-oral-history/ https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/latest-links/smathers-library-unveils-joel-buchanan-oral-history-archive/</p>
Ibram X Kendi	<p>Dr. Kendi was a professor at UF, and he is the founding director of Boston University's Center for Antiracist Research. He has written seminal texts on racial discrimination and history in the US as well as <i>How to be an Antiracist</i>, a book that is will long be remembered as one of the most important works outlining the principles of antiracism in American history.</p>
Zora Neale Hurston	<p>(January 7, 1891^{[1]:17[2]:5} – January 28, 1960) was an American author, anthropologist, and filmmaker. She portrayed racial struggles in the early-1900s American South and published research on hoodoo.^[3] The most popular of her four novels is Their Eyes Were Watching God, published in 1937. She also wrote more than 50 short stories, plays, and essays.</p> <p>Hurston was born in Notasulga, Alabama, and moved with her family to Eatonville, Florida, in 1894. She later used Eatonville as the setting for many of her stories. It is now the site of the "Zora! Festival", held each year in her honor.^[4]</p> <p>The author of <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>, Hurston was a noted anthropologist who lived in Eatonville, FL--the setting for some of her works. Notably, the Hurston papers are housed at UF: https://ufdc.ufl.edu/znhurs. Contemporary of Marjorie Rawlings.</p>
Thomas A. Wright	<p>Reverend T.A. Wright, who died in 2014, was the president of the Alachua County NAACP in the 1960s. He led the effort to desegregate the county's public schools. His daughter, LaVon (Wright) Bracy, was the first African American to graduate from Gainesville High School.</p>
Rosa B. Williams	
Dwayne the Rock Johnson	
Dr. Watson Porter	<p>Dr. Watson Porter, a Canadian physician, established Porter's Quarters, one of Gainesville's oldest and most historic African American neighborhoods in 1884. Dr. Porter sold land exclusively to African American families, encouraging them to plant, grow gardens and become self-sufficient. https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=150690</p>
Dr. Banks and Dr. Cosby University Park	
Bessie Coleman	<p>An early American civil aviator (mascot can stay flyers). She was the first woman of African-American descent, and also the first of Native-American descent, to hold a pilot license.</p> <p>She was the first woman of African-American and also Native-American descent to hold a pilot's license. She also earned an international pilot's license.</p>

	Her story represents bravery, dedication, and overcoming amazing challenges to pursue a dream. She is a true Flyer!
Virgil D. Hawkins	<p>He was monumental in helping black men and women gain access to higher education in Florida.</p> <p>UF law has a great summary of what he endured and later accomplished. https://www.law.ufl.edu/areas-of-study/experiential-learning/clinics/virgil-d-hawkins-story</p>
Perry McGriff Jr.	Was a leader to Alachua County. He helped to adopt the one mill for the schools to keep art and music in the schools. While in Tallahassee, FL as a state house representative he helped to pass bills for education. He was involved in numerous non-profits and sat on many boards to help education in Alachua County. He was a part of the Boys and Girls Club of Alachua County. He dedicated his life to helping the youth of Alachua County.
Judge James Dean	<p>Monroe County Florida -- Having graduated first in his class from Howard Law School he was elected Monroe County judge over two white candidates in 1888. (Dean was said to be the first black county judge elected after reconstruction in Florida.)</p> <p>Governor Francis P. Fleming removed him from office in 1889 for marrying a black woman and a white man (although the groom said he was mulatto).</p> <p>In 2002 Governor Jeb Bush reinstated his judgeship.</p>
Taylor Lindsey	He was one of the Gilchrist county sheriff's deputies that was killed a couple of years ago. He was born and raised in Gainesville. He attended Oak Hall and Gainesville High Schools and was a local hero
Elias McDaniel / Bo Diddley	Elementary to honor a black man who positively influenced the culture and community of Alachua county.
George Orwell	
Daphne Duval Williams	She was the first female administrator at Lincoln High School and was the first black woman to enroll at UF. She is a part of the Matheson History Museum's exhibition "Trailblazers: 150 Years of Alachua County Women." You can learn more about her in the online version of the exhibition here: https://spark.adobe.com/page/cHJRnxVsLi0qd/ .
Mr. Chamberlin	
Kirby Smith	
Dorothy Height	
Ella Baker	
Diane Nash	
Daisy Bates	
Raye Montague	
Chestnut	
Booker T. Washington	He was a former slave who put himself through school and then dedicated his life to education. He founded 2 schools (one that's now known as Tuskee University) and was an advisor to two presidents (Roosevelt and Taft).
Ruby Bridges	Ruby Bridges is best known for going to an all white school. That may not seem like something brave now, but she was a black six year old girl, in a time where segregation was a big deal. I believe that the school should be named after her because she was brave, and went to go get an education when she knew she would be bullied. She persevered and now she is an American civil rights activist. I also think that the school should be named in her honor is because she is black, so it's shows that black people are equals. And she is a girl and that shows us that girls are just as great as boys are. The school motto can be "ruby bridges elementary school, where we build bridges, not walls". It would be symbolic because President Trump is claiming that he will build a wall between the United States and Mexico. Instead of Josiah T. Walls, where the school name would be invariably shortened to Walls elementary, it would be Bridges elementary.
Cynthia M. Chestnut	A prominent African American women who not only was the first African American female city commissioner but was also the first African American female to be elected mayor, county commissioner, and she served as the state representative from the 23rd district

Neil A. Butler	A prominent African American male. Neil Butler Elementary School name would be known for the late Neil Arthur Butler, who served as Gainesville's first African American mayor and city commissioner, a World War II combat veteran, and a Orange Heights native. Neil Butler strives to improve the race relations in Gainesville while also working on a minority recruiting program in our city's public service department.
Mary Johnson	
Mary W. Jackson	
Dorothy Vaughn	
Katherine G. Johnson	African-American mathematician at NASA. Great role model representing diversity and gender equality in a prevalently white and male dominate discipline.
Ida K. Brown	A journalist and co-founder of the NAACP
Dr. Sarah Lucretia Robb	She was the first female doctor in north central Florida and she and her husband lived in Gainesville. She was a nurse and her husband encouraged her to become a physician. She earned her medical degree in Germany because the medical schools in the United States would not accept her. After that she opened her practice in Gainesville. She is buried in Evergreen Cemetery.
Corrine Brown	
Fred Rogers	While he was a long time resident of Pittsburg, he is a proud graduate of Rollins College in Florida. He of course spent his professional career focused on children, but was also noteworthy in his moral courage to buck racist trends that were on television at the time.
Robert E. Lee	
Lucretia Thompson	
Dorothy Tison Fagan	
Ronald McNair	
Michael P. Anderson	
Christa McAuliff	
Mae C. Jemison, M.D.	
Dr. LaVon Bracy	One of the first four students to integrate Gainesville High, and was the first black student to graduate from Gainesville High School. She was the daughter of a prominent NAACP leader, and has gone on to live a life of advocacy and fighting for racial justice in Florida. She is still alive, and thus, would be able to be honored in person and speak to the school and community. She is a black woman, how many schools in north Florida are named after black women? And she has written a children's book about her experience at Gainesville High.
John Gilmore Riley	Florida educator and civic leader from the Tallahassee area
James Wheldon Johnson	
Dr. John C. Rawls	
Frank Gary Crom	
Dr. Esther Hill Hawks	A medical doctor in Florida, during the civil war, attending to confederate soldiers from the battle of Olustee. AND she started and ran the first racially integrated school in Florida! She was an impressive, intelligent, educated, professional, humanitarian example of a progressive thinker and leader. She's an example of the philosophy to be the change you want to see in the world.
James Baldwin	
Maya Angelou	Contemporary African American poetess. Role model in fighting for integration through arts.
Osceola	Native American imprisoned in Ft. Marion. One of the leaders of the second Seminole war. Coacoochee and Osceola are good references to the previous name of the school since Finley was employed between many in the second Seminole war
Coachocee	Native American imprisoned and escaped from Ft. Marion. Coacoochee and Osceola are good references to the previous name of the school since Finley was employed between many in the second Seminole war

Thelma M. Jordan	<p>First female Black principal in Alachua County, and an educator here for 48 years. Her story is remarkable and it can be found here: https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.gainesville.com/article/20050202/news/604152702%3ftemplate=ampart</p>
W. Stetson Kennedy	<p>“During months spent trying to pose as a hard-boiled bill collector, seeking payments on furniture accounts from impoverished Southern whites and Negroes during the depths of the depression, I became acutely aware of one-third of the nation. No sooner was I aware of their problems than I determined to do something about them. It seemed simple at first. I would write a book telling how the multitudes suffer from lack of food clothing, shelter – and the other two-thirds of the nation (who couldn’t possibly realize how much suffering was going on) would read the book and take appropriate action to alleviate the distressful conditions. I was not long so naïve” Stetson Kennedy, 1936</p> <p>Today, The Stetson Kennedy Foundation perpetuates his life work, partnering with the community in advocating for Fellow Man and Mother Earth.</p>
Robert T. Gasche	<p>He was an educator UF, Journalist, Veteran IWO JIMA, Korea, Purple Heart recipient & well known in Gainesville. Active in our veteran community. Very active in Gainesville as he continued working & educating our youth, until his death July 30, 2019, at age 94. He is buried at Forest Meadows in Gainesville. His family lives in Gainesville.</p>
Milton Lewis	<p>Received the Navy Cross, the Nations 2nd highest decoration for valor. A CPL in the United States Marine Corps. Was the first person killed from Gainesville, Alachua County, killed in action during WW II.</p> <p>He attended Gainesville high school, outstanding athlete in swimming and football. Also important, he earned his high school diploma in service, when he cut his schooling short, to enlist in USMC to serve our country in 1938. His education was very important to Milton Lewis.</p> <p>He was killed in action serving our country on the island Tulagi in 1942. For his heroic actions on the island he was awarded the Navy Cross, our Nation’s highest decoration. He is buried at Evergreen Cemetery.</p> <p>You can dial in to this ph # to hear a recording of his history from Evergreen 352-327-9004, 227# His family lives in Gainesville.</p>
Horace Mann	<p>Was an American educational reformer and Whig politician known for his commitment to promoting public education.</p> <p>His first speech in that role was in advocacy of its right and duty to exclude slavery from the territories, and in a letter in December of that year he said: "I think the country is to experience serious times. Interference with slavery will excite civil commotion in the South. But it is best to interfere. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horace_Mann</p>
John Marshall Harlan	<p>The only Supreme Court Justice that dissented in Plessy versus Ferguson. Choosing "Harlan" for the name for Finley would remind students to stick up for their beliefs even against the majority and, when they are proven right their beliefs will prevail. No one better than John Harlan represents a citizen standing up for the principles of the United States of America as expressed in the Constitution against the politically correct consensus of the time he lived in.</p>
Arlene Johnson	<p>Taught Kindergarten for many many years. Arlene provided the gateway to school for thousands of young people. She has kept in touch with so many of her kids. She is also very much alive.</p>
George Floyd	
Grace & Sydney Knight	<p>These two distinguished members of our community lived across the Street from Finley Elementary for decades and distinguished themselves in the community for decades with their benevolent civic engagement. Their modest home is a testament to their philanthropic outlook on life. Grace earned a master's degree in education from University of Florida (sorry, I don't know if she was a professor, teacher or otherwise worked as an educator) and Sid was a business consultant who earned a juris doctorate at UF. Both were avid government watchdogs. In a few words, they were kind, caring and well-respected. Both have been deceased for decades so their reputations are firmly intact as upstanding citizens.</p>
Cora P. Roberson	<p>She was the 1st black female teacher to teach white students in Alachua county. I don't think you could find a more appropriate person to name a school.</p>

Maya Rudolph	
Clarence Thomas	He is a wonderful role model for the children to aspire to and a great thinker and learner. He has achieved the highest position in his field and is a great influencer.
King Payne (King Py)	King Payne led the LaChua Seminol for almost 30 years.
Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK)	
Susie Mae White	First certified black school psychologist in Alachua County schools.
Vernon Trapp	Principal
Detroit Williams	Music Instructor, A.L. Mebane
Harold E. Jackson	Music Instructor
Jefferson Franklin Long	<p>(1836-1907), a Georgian, filled a vacancy in the US House of Representatives during the 41st Congress. The remainder of the term he filled lasted only three months—from January 16, 1871 to March 3, 1871. The</p> <p>First African-American to be elected to the US House of Representatives from his state and the second to be elected to the US House, Long gave just one speech to Congress. That speech also was a first- thefirst to be delivered by an African- American in the US House. Long gave it on February 1, 1871. He "opposed a mea- sure which would remove voting restric- tions on ex-Confederate political leaders because he felt these men still posed a threat to African Americans political freedom if allowed to regain power." He declared, "If this House removed the dis- abilities of disloyal men, I venture to prophesy you will again have trouble from the very same men who gave you trouble before." Long's efforts to oppose Confederate amnesty failed, and two weeks later, President Grant allowed the legislation to become law without his signature. In less than a month, Long's</p> <p><u>That was it!</u></p>
Isaac Newton	
Albert Einstein	
James Earl Carter, Jr.	Continues to display the great American spirit of love and unity.
Less than Jake	
Wuerrfel to Doering	
Dr. Alexander H. Darnes	<p>A former slave Dr. Alexander Hanson Darnes, who later became Jacksonville’s first African-American physician, and a health care hero during Jacksonville’s yellow fever epidemic of 1887-88. When others fled the city, Darnes remained behind to care for the sick. Darnes was held in such high regard as a doctor and human being that when he died in 1894, some 3,000 people attended his funeral. It was said to be the largest funeral held in that city to that date.</p> <p>Darnes’ life story is intriguing. He was born into slavery in St. Augustine to Violet Pinckney, a slave in the home of Judge Joseph Lee Smith. At 15, he became the still-enslaved personal valet of the judge’s son, Edmund Kirby Smith, who later became a Confederate General whose statue was recently removed from Statuary Hall in Washington D.C.. Darnes was Smith’s valet throughout Smith’s military career. After Emancipation, Darnes attended Lincoln University and Howard University, where he earned a medical degree.</p> <p>Here is further information on this remarkable man. There is much more online: "Another Invisible Man: Alexander H. Darnes, M.D.," by Charle Tingley, The Florida Historical Quarterly Vol. 94, No. 3, 500 Years of Florida History—The Nineteenth Century: 1800 to 1870 (WINTER 2016), pp. 476-508 (33 pages) https://www.jstor.org/stable/24769280?read-now=1&refreqid=excelsior%3A275133eaaa2c8776b8d594d627aaad67&seq=3#page_scan_tab_contents "Who Belongs on the Pedestal," by Gary Mormino, The Tampa Bay Times, Published Jul. 6, 2015 https://www.tampabay.com/news/perspective/perspective-who-belongs-on-the-pedestal/2236067/ Wikipedia site: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Darnes</p>

Abraham Lincoln	
Mae Isler	
Jessie Heard	
Dr. Dan Boyd	<p>Dr. Boyd was a former principal of Gainesville HS as well as a former superintendent of Alachua County Schools among his many accomplishments.</p> <p>See Gainesville Sun “voice of the people” 7/9/20</p>
Rosa Parks	
John A. Warnick	<p>A Professor at the University of Florida he received many honors and he inspired many inside and outside of the classroom. He was a man that understood learning, teaching and sharing his vast knowledge with all he met.</p>
Jack Lampros	<p>As a child Jack Lampros sold newspapers and help his parents who had many restaurants in Gainesville. Jack Lampros graduated from Gainesville High School in 1944 and then went to the University of Florida and graduated in 1949 with a degree in Business Administration. Jack Lampros served in the Navy Jack Lampros was Vice President and Trust Officer of the First Security Bank in Ogden Utah for 36 years. He has always had a love for the University of Florida and the Florida Gators. Jack Lampros has a Scholarship The Jack and Betty Lampros Graduate Fellowship and Lectureship Fund for UF Students who major in Finance.</p>
Margaret A. Rosenberger	<p>First principal of Littlewood Elementary School and she served in numerous administrative roles during her many years in the Alachua County School District. She was a strong advocate for all students, especially minorities and disabled populations. No one worked harder to improve education for children in Alachua county. Margaret A. Rosenberger would be an honorable and suitable name for the J.J. Finley Elementary School. (See https://www.countrysidefunerals.com/notices/Margaret-Rosenberger)</p>
R. Rap Brown	
Jacob J. (Jediadiah) Riordan	<p>Relevance: Jacob J Riordan was born and raised in Gainesville. He attended all levels of schooling in Alachua County, including lettering in baseball at both Santa Fe College and the University of Florida. He epitomized Student Athlete and has been an upstanding member of the community.</p> <p>His ties to the school in question dates back over 30 years and has become legend in all corners of the county and well beyond.</p> <p>Following a heart wrenching defeat on the school diamond, young Jacob was challenged to a foot race by a member of the victorious squad. This was not just an ordinary member either. He had the respect of the entire city and was feared for his agility and speed. However, Jacob was not afraid, and just as young David stood tall against Goliath of the Philistines, Jacob accepted the challenge made by Blaha of Bravos.</p> <p>When the two broke from the starting line the cheers from the dozens of fans in attendance was deafening. To this day, I can’t fathom how either were able to maintain their balance as the ground shook. Nevertheless, they managed to maintain momentum as they shot out toward the centerfield fence like they were shot out of a cannon. It couldn’t have lasted more than 13 seconds, but Jacob triumphed by 3 steps.</p> <p>Legend has it that Jacob hurdled the fence and didn’t stop until he reached the Law School; where he was then picked up by his parents.</p>
George H. Starke, Jr.	
Sylvia Mendez	<p>She, along with her Mexican-Puerto Rican family fought to integrate schools years before Brown vs. Board of Education)</p>
George Washington Carver	<p>Speaks for itself.</p>
Leannetta McNealy	
Derek Zoolander Center	<p>The Derek Zoolander Center for Kids who can’t read good and want to learn to do other things good too.</p> <p>Derek Zoolander is a very accomplished Male fashion model. He won Vh1's Male model of the year 3 years in a row. Derek grew up the son of a coal miner. He was the only male in his family to escape the harsh environment of coal mining. Derek struggled with learning disabilities for his whole life and always wanted to one day open to a school to help educate students who like him struggled with education. He also helped to save the Prime Minister of</p>

	Malaysia from being assassinated by foiling the plot of the evil mogatu. He is a role model that everyone can look up to and I believe that honoring him with a namesake of a school would be great.
A. Quinn Jones	Principal of Lincoln High School, Gainesville at the time of its opening in 1923.
Sam Carter	Likely the first man lynched in the Rosewood Massacre of 1923.
Queen Njinga	West African ruler that was responsible for arranging the passages to American of so many of the ancestors of Finley students.
Julia Leslie Cosby	An educator who was the first black census enumerator, and helped to desegrate the University of Florida.
Clara Floyd Gehan	"All of the women in our current exhibit, <i>Saving the Sunshine State: Women Leaders in the 20th Century</i> , were trailblazers in their fields. Clara Floyd Gehan was no exception. She paved the way for female law students at the University of Florida. First female law student at the University of Florida.
Dr. Michael Gnanon	
John R. Alison	A famous Gainesville pilot. John Richardson "Johnny" Alison was born in Micanopy, Florida, in 1912. He graduated from Gainesville High School in 1931 and the University of Florida in 1935, with a degree in industrial engineering. He joined the Army Air Corps in 1936 and became a decorated flying ace, serving in World War II. He was greatly admired for his flying skills and innovation and is considered by many to be the father of Air Force Special Operations. Formerly the namesake of Gainesville Regional Airport.
Eartha M. M. White	Born in Jacksonville, the 13th child of a former slave, Eartha Mary Magdalene White attended schools in Florida and New York. An educator and publisher, she established the Clara White Mission in honor of her mother during the Depression in the 1930s. She also ran a prison mission and donated property for community projects. In 1967 she began the Eartha M.M. White Nursing Home, which grew into Jacksonville's largest employer of blacks. She was a Women's Hall of Fame inductee 1986.
Malcolm X	
Marjorie Bingham	Mrs. Bingham taught Fifth Grade. She had an enormous impact on her students because oh her energy, her imagination and her love of her work. She sculpted and rigged up a small volcano and caused it to erupt magnificently. The class was agog. By the way this happened over 65 years ago, before model volcanos became fashionable.
Henrietta Cannon	Mrs. Cannon was a wonderful, loving person and an outstanding teacher! I also support naming the school after our music teacher, Mrs. Hays. When I attended J.J. from K -6, I never once gave a thought to whom J.J. Finley was.
Isabel Hays	Past Music Teacher at Finley. As an alum of J.J. Finley and a lifelong teacher of music, my gratitude to Isabel Hays knows no bounds. She inspired me towards my life's work. I remain deeply grateful for her dedication and enthusiasm.
Frank Shorter	
Mary May Purser	artist, painted for WPA, lived in Gainesville from 1953 till death, supervised art program in Alachua County Schools, taught at UF College of Education, taught elementary school art (see http://www.purserstudio.com/mBio.html)
Emma B. Eveleth	taught African American children in Gainesville for 8 years following the Civil War at Gainesville's Union Academy
Maggie Gardner	taught African American children in Gainesville after the Civil War
Jane Stuart	Jane Stuart Juergensmeyer lived in the Golfview neighborhood, where she wrote novels during the 1970s under the name Jane Stuart. Her novel Yellowhawk is set in an elementary school and the dust jacket photo of the author was taken at J. J. Finley Elementary School.
Linda Leonard Lamme	Prof. Lamme taught at UF at the College of Education from 1973 until 2008. Her focus was children's literature. In addition to publishing well-known books in the field she worked closely with local elementary schools to

	promote literacy especially among disadvantaged children. She also won fame as an advocate for children from LGBTQ families in public schools.
--	--